

# It's Personal Economic Development

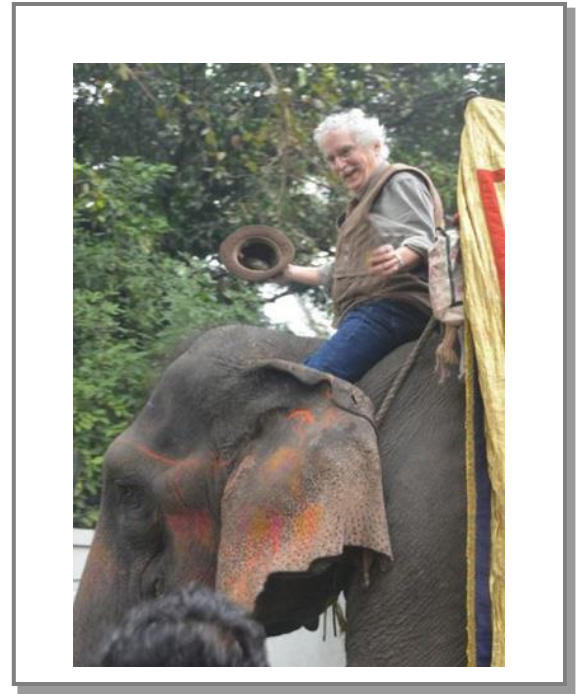
## THE CHALLENGE

A sound transportation system creates jobs and strengthens the economy. Infrastructure is one of the first considerations when new businesses decide where to locate. Without additional revenues, MoDOT will be forced to prioritize where it spends its limited funds. This means no economic development projects and subsequently lost opportunities for Missourians.

### Lester Goodin

Mr. Goodin is the owner of several hundred row-crop acres in Mississippi County where he has been a farmer for several decades. As part of his commitment to Mississippi County, Mr. Goodin also serves as a Board member on the St. John's Levee District. In addition, Mr. Goodin serves on the Board of Directors for the Southeast Missouri Food Bank, which provides food to the underprivileged across the entire Bootheel of Missouri. Mr. Goodin also owns the Wilderness Lodge in Reynolds County, which is a resort destination for individuals wanting to spend time on the Black River.

Mr. Goodin advocates that a good transportation system is crucial to the success of each of the enterprises in which he has a vested interest.



**As a farmer:** Farming practices have changed significantly in the last decade. Although the crops grown remain the same, the machinery used to plant, spray, cultivate, and harvest these crops have gotten larger and larger. MoDOT initially participated in a program known as "Getting Missouri Out of the Mud" in the 1920's to pave and name most of the state's supplementary system. These roads are still commonly known as "farm to market" roadways. However, in the 1920's, most of the crops grown in Mississippi County were harvested with much smaller machines. Typically, most of the crops were transported from the fields to the storage bins using small tractors that pulled wagons. Today, all most all of the crops are transported directly from the field using full-size tractor trailers. Mr. Goodin describes this situation with the phrase, "Major loads on minor roads." These roadways were simply not designed to handle these loads, and as a result their deterioration is accelerated.

**As a Levee District Board member:** The Board members of the district are required to be landowners within the district area. In the Bootheel region of Missouri, it is known that proper drainage is vital to the success of agriculture. Unless proper drainage is maintained, water is retained within the ditches and ultimately in the fields. With the flat terrain, major losses can be experienced in a short time unless constant, vigilant maintenance by all affected parties remains a priority. With MoDOT's limited funding, the Levee and Drainage districts are very concerned with how MoDOT will be able to maintain proper drainage.

**As a SEMO Food Bank Board member:** The SEMO Food Bank serves 16 counties within Southeast Missouri. The headquarters of the organization is located in Sikeston, MO. Refrigerated trucks drive daily throughout the area to communities where the food is distributed. As roads continue to deteriorate, the delivery trucks owned by the Food Bank will suffer from the poor condition of the pavement. Since the Food Bank is a non-profit organization, these extra expenses will result in less services being provided for the area, and for the needy families.

**As an owner of a river side resort:** The Wilderness Lodge is located close to the town of Lesterville, MO within Reynolds County. It offers the rental of lodges, camping facilities, and canoes. This business is highly dependent on the condition of the transportation system surrounding the lodge. MoDOT owns several bridges within the region that, if closed, would have a severe negative result to the tourism industry in this region. Furthermore, the pavement condition would also affect the desire to vacation in the area.